EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Edmonton Seniors 2000: STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE

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Prepared by the Interdepartmental/Citizen Committee to Review Municipal Services for Older People

THE CITY OF Edmonton

EDMONTON

SENIORS 2000:

STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE

STRATEGIES

RECOMMENDATIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prepared by:
TheInterdepartmental/Citizen
Committee to Review Municipal Services
for Older People

March 1989

CHALLENGE

The Edmonton Seniors 2000 Project was designed to plan the framework for municipally supported programs and services for older people to the turn of the century when the senior population is projected to be about 70,000 people, 50 percent larger than currently. Potentially high costs of services are challenging governments to seek alternative means of care. The Federal Government is beginning to promote prevention and healthy lifestyles; the Province, community-based service. Managers of City of Edmonton Departments and Authorities also recognized the need to plan for this future. Staff and citizen volunteers worked cooperatively and productively to develop and achieve consensus on the concepts, recommendations, and strategies contained in this report.

In order to develop the plan, the Project Committee reviewed current health, social service, recreation, and other relevant concepts in order to understand their implications for seniors' services. The Committee also examined demographic projections for the senior population, conducted workshops and round table discussions with service agencies and seniors' representatives, and solicited concerns and other input from seniors themselves.

FRAMEWORK

Committee members concurred that municipal services for seniors should:

- be directed towards the promotion of "wellness" to enable older individuals to remain active, independent, and contributing members of society;
- be preventive and facilitative, enhancing the quality of life for seniors and assisting them to achieve wellness;
- foster development of the community and involve seniors in the decision-making which affects their lives;
- be designed as community-based services whenever possible to provide ease of access; and
- encourage mutual support, self-help and self-care for seniors and promote appropriate lifestyle choices.

The Project Committee provides directions and means to reach these directions through fourteen recommendations designed to bring Edmonton's services for older people into the twenty-first century. These recommendations promote positive images of aging and of older people in the community. They emphasize the dignity of individual seniors, foster integration and involvement of the senior population into the mainstream of society. They also reinforce the Committee's fundamental beliefs that municipal services should:

- o involve older people in the planning, development and delivery of seniors' programs;
- o promote and protect the health, safety, and well-being of seniors';
- o foster cooperation among organizations of seniors, seniors' services, and municipal services;
- o work towards consistent goals for older people; and
- o make information readily available to seniors about how to access these programs for seniors.

B L U E P R I N T

The Project Committee proposes sixty-four strategies to City Departments and Authorities to accomplish the goals of wellness, integration, and full participation of seniors and to help ensure implementation of the recommendations.

The Project Committee recommends that the City of Edmonton urge other levels of government to recognize their responsibilities in addressing the need for services and programs to help older people live more productive and satisfying lives. To fully implement additional preventive and facilitative services in Edmonton, the City of Edmonton requires additional financial support from the Provincial and Federal Governments.

The Committee recognizes that the needs of seniors are dynamic, influenced by many factors - environmental, political, social and economic. The Committee therefore recommends an ongoing consultation process for the implementation of the recommendations and strategies, with a comprehensive review in 1994.

CONCLUSION

Each Department and Authority will have to examine the recommendations and strategies and determine how best to implement them within their areas of responsibility. The Project Committee believes that adoption of the directions proposed in this report will better meet the needs of Edmonton's older population and should ultimately cost the City of Edmonton less than proportionately increasing funding for traditional ways to meet the needs of future seniors.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIES[1]

1. **IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON EMPHASIZE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT APPROACHES IN MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE INCREASING SENIOR POPULATION AND INVOLVE OLDER PERSONS IN THE PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, AND DELIVERY OF PROGRAMS.**

   1a. **That Municipal Departments and Authorities prepare plans for their services which impact upon seniors, with input from seniors, and where appropriate utilize a community development approach in their planning.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Edmonton Public Library, Social Services, Parks and Recreation, Transportation and Police Departments)*

   (Phase I)

   1b. **That, where appropriate and feasible, Civic Departments examine existing service delivery requirements and reallocate resources for older people from direct service delivery to community development approaches.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Parks and Recreation, Social Services, Police and Transportation Departments)*

   (Phase II)

   1c. **That Civic Departments and Authorities include seniors with special needs (e.g., those who are disabled and of ethnic minorities) in planning and implementing programs for seniors.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Edmonton Public Library, Social Services, Parks and Recreation, Transportation and Police Departments)*

   (Phase I)

   1d. **That Civic Departments assist seniors' ethno-cultural associations to establish mutual support groups and access services of established organizations where feasible.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Social Services, and Parks and Recreation, Departments)*

   (Phase I)

   1e. **That the City of Edmonton continue to support in principle, efforts of the Greater Edmonton Foundation aimed at developing residents councils in Lodges.** *(Action - Social Services Department)*

   (Phase I)

2. **IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT EACH CITY OF EDMONTON DEPARTMENT AND AUTHORITY DEVELOP OR ENHANCE STRATEGIC PLANS IN RESPONSE TO THE NEEDS OF SENIORS.**

   2a. **That the strategic planning processes of Civic Departments and Authorities include plans for services for older people, in view of the expected increase in numbers, as well as promote intergenerational program opportunities.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Edmonton Public Library, Social Services and Parks and Recreation Departments)*

   (Phase I)

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1 The fourteen recommendations are statements of intent and should be considered together. Implementation phases are identified for strategies. Phase I indicates strategies which should be acted upon as soon as possible; Phase II suggests these should be implemented within two to three years and; Phase III, can be acted upon beyond three years.

2b. **That, in strategic planning, Edmonton Public Library explore the concerns of seniors for specific programs, such as book clubs and literary discussion groups, encourage programs for and by seniors and the staffing requirements involved.**

(Phase II)

3. **IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON PLAN, DEVELOP, AND IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS FOR SENIORS IN AN INTEGRATED (TOWARD CONSISTENT GOALS) AND COORDINATED (WORKING TOGETHER) MANNER.**

3a. **That the City of Edmonton establish an interdepartmental/citizen committee of civic personnel and older people to share resource information and be proactive in examining and proposing solutions to issues affecting older people (e.g., health promotion, bereavement adjustment, substance abuse, elder abuse).** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Social Services, Parks and Recreation, Transportation as "Core" members; others as required)*

(Phase II)

3b. **That interdepartmental wellness programs for seniors be piloted (emphasizing coordination, integration, exchange of information, and accessibility to other programs).** *(Action - Parks and Recreation and Social Services Departments and Edmonton Board of Health)*

(Phase II)

3c. **That the Edmonton Board of Health and the Social Services Department clarify and interpret their Home Care and Services for Seniors programs respectively for both professionals and older people particularly in the area of provision of support services.**

(Phase I)

3d. **That a suitable mechanism be developed by the Parks and Recreation and Social Services Departments to ensure adequate and appropriate financial support for agencies and services where there is a perceived overlap in recreation and social services.**

(Phase II)

3e. **That the Social Services Department and the Edmonton Board of Health work in collaboration with community agencies participating in the Edmonton "Care for Care-Giver Committee to explore the feasibility of implementing appropriate recommendations of the committee".**

(Phase I)

3f. **That opportunities for coordinating (consistent, cost-effective, understandable) Municipal publicity on senior's services on a city-wide basis be explored.** *(Action - Coordinated by Corporate Communications)*

(Phase I)

4. **IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON AND SENIORS ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES SERVING SENIORS PROMOTE AND DEVELOP COMMUNICATION NETWORKS TO FACILITATE MORE EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY.**

4a. **That the City of Edmonton explore with major seniors organizations and agencies serving seniors the feasibility of developing computer links between City Departments and these organizations for inquiries, information provision and exchange, and space bookings, as well as for investigation of a "common-newsletter".** *(Action - Social Services, Parks and Recreation, Transportation Departments, Computer Resources)*

(Phase II)

4b. **That the Social Services and Parks and Recreation Departments encourage Senior Centres, Community Leagues, Schools and other organizations to develop and provide services like snow shovelling, grass cutting and other household supports on a neighbourhood basis.**

(Phase I)

4c. **That the Social Services Department and Edmonton Board of Health initiate a project explore with Senior Centres agencies serving older people and the older people themselves the need for counselling services for seniors and develop plans to meet these needs.**

(Phase II)

4d. **That the Edmonton Board of Health and the Social Services Department facilitate the coordination (examine with community agencies, help develop) of institutional and community bereavement services within Edmonton, and that additional support be considered to improve/expand the outreach component of these programs.**

(Phase II)

4e. **That the Parks and Recreation Department offer, and encourage recreation groups and Community Leagues to offer, a variety of community-based recreational programs for seniors, including leisure/resource education sessions.**

(Phase II)

4f. **That the Social Services and Planning and Development Departments encourage, by acting as consultants to the private development industry, the provision of a wide range of housing options, with related social supports, for older people throughout Edmonton.**

(Phase II)

4g. **That the City of Edmonton request Edmonton Meals-on-Wheels to review the need for and feasibility of providing ethnic meals and therapeutic diets (e.g., cholesterol-free).** *(Action - Social Services Department)*

(Phase I)

4h. **That City of Edmonton Departments work in cooperation with Federal and Provincial programs (e.g., New Horizons, Seniors Independence Program) to maximize the benefits of these programs to Edmonton's older population.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Parks and Recreation and Social Services Departments)*

(Phase I)

4i. **That the City of Edmonton support efforts of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired in establishing a committee of seniors groups to explore issues affecting older people and gather opinions of seniors.** *(Action - All Departments and Authorities)*

(Phase I)

5. **IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON ENDORSE AND SUPPORT THE PRINCIPLE OF "SENIORS SERVING SENIORS" AND REALLOCATE APPROPRIATE RESOURCES FOR ITS EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION.**

5a. **That positive marketing approaches be made toward seniors, recognizing different age and sub-groups of the "senior" population, to encourage reaching out to other seniors to provide mutual support.** *(Action - Corporate Communications coordinate, all Departments and Authorities)*

(Phase I)

5b. **That the City of Edmonton further encourage older people to invest efforts in aiding their age peers through volunteering in Municipal programs.** *(Action - All Departments and Authorities)*

(Phase I)

5c. **That the Edmonton Police Department enhance its role in assisting seniors in community programs by increasing volunteer resources and by actively recruiting older volunteers for its crime prevention programs.**

(Phase I)

6. **IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON INITIATE AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION FOSTERING A POSITIVE IMAGE OF OLDER PEOPLE.**

6a. **That the City of Edmonton facilitate (encourage and help existing organizations) development of an education program for the public including: (i) understanding the aging and coping processes; (ii) an appreciation of the potential of seniors to assist themselves and other seniors; (iii) an emphasis on a healthy lifestyle and (iv) promotion of positive images of aging and the aged.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Social Services and Parks and Recreation Departments)*

(Phase II)

6b. **That the City of Edmonton work with existing community groups to facilitate (encourage, help develop, explore, rent City facilities) continuing educational programs for seniors to provide information about the changes that occur during aging for successful aging.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Edmonton Public Library, Parks and Recreation and Social Services Departments)*

(Phase I)

6c. **That the City of Edmonton Personnel Department extend its Pre-Retirement Training Program to employees aged 35 to 45 and their spouses.**

(Phase II)

6d. That the City of Edmonton request the Provincial Government to revise the timing of Senior Citizens Week promotions to reflect more closely the activity peak of seniors' organizations; that such events be held in the early fall or mid-spring; and that Senior Citizens Week be used to educate citizens about the abilities and skills of older people. *(Action - Social Services and Parks and Recreation Departments)*

(Phase II)

7. IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON WORK WITH SENIORS GROUPS TO EDUCATE AND ASSIST THEM IN PROMOTING AND PROTECTING THEIR HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY.

7a. That the City of Edmonton continue to support the essential housing nature of the Senior Citizens Lodge Program while helping to ensure a good linkage with the Long Term Care System. *(Action - Social Services Department)*

(Phase II)

7b. That the Edmonton Police Department assign a specific person to act as Liaison Officer for seniors.

(Phase I)

7c. That a Safety-Protection-Security Program for seniors be developed and be made part of the Neighbourhood Watch Program. *(Action - Police Department)*

(Phase II)

7d. That the senior population density be taken into consideration when the Police Department decides to reallocate or expand Neighbourhood Foot Patrol.

(Phase II)

8. IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON PLAN, DEVELOP, AND IMPLEMENT TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR CITY PERSONNEL WORKING WITH OLDER PERSONS.

8a. That the Personnel Department, in cooperation with the Social Services Department and Edmonton Board of Health, develop and provide a program to educate employees on how to relate to older adults, their potential in society, the aging process, and how to deal with mental or physical deterioration related to aging in day-to-day business.

(Phase II)

8b. That the Personnel Department develop, or obtain, an information package and a presentation for use by City Departments and others about the abilities and skills of older people.

(Phase II)

8c. That the City of Edmonton explore the feasibility of expanding existing programs to train operators of City owned vehicles to stress awareness of seniors in difficulty and the appropriate ways to respond. *(Action - Personnel Department coordinate; All Departments and Authorities operating vehicle fleets)*

(Phase I)

9. **IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON ENSURE THAT ALL CITY FACILITIES, WHENEVER FEASIBLE, ARE ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL PEOPLE, INCLUDING OLDER PEOPLE.**

9a. **That the recommendations relating to access of City facilities and programs in the Report of the Citizens Task Force for Physically Disabled Persons be supported for implementation.** *(Action - All Departments and Authorities)*

(Phase I)

9b. **That, where appropriate and feasible, municipally supported services and facilities, especially those designed specifically for older people, be community-based and accessible by public transit.** *(Action - All Departments and Authorities)*

(Phase II)

9c. **That City services and facilities be designed to ensure the comfort of older people (e.g., warmer pools at leisure centres, lighter weight doors, wider benches, appropriate chair height).** *(Action - All Departments and Authorities)*

(Phase II)

9d. **That the City of Edmonton explore the feasibility of developing standards of accessibility for Municipal buildings and facilities within the flexibility permitted by the Alberta Building Code.** *(Action - All Departments and Authorities)*

(Phase III)

9e. **That Edmonton Public Library continue to expand its provision of Large Print (soft cover when available) and Talking Books.**

(Phase III)

10. **IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON FACILITATE THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES FOR SENIORS.**

10a. **That the present central information and referral service of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired be expanded and strengthened to provide for the information needs of seniors in Edmonton.** *(Action - Social Services Department)*

(Phase I)

10b. **That a strategy relating to municipal resources (information about and method of accessing) for seniors be developed.** *(Action - Corporate Communications coordinate; All Departments and Authorities)*

(Phase II)

10c. **That the City of Edmonton assist (provide the information for) ethno-cultural groups wishing to translate information on municipal services for seniors into various languages.** *(Action - Corporate Communications coordinate; All Departments and Authorities)*

(Phase II)

10d. **That the City of Edmonton through the media (public service announcements, community publications) inform seniors of and advertise those services, facilities, and special events, which affect older adults.** *(Action - Corporate Communications coordinate; All Departments and Authorities)*

(Phase II)

10e. **That Edmonton Telephones print the government and other information sections in the Edmonton Telephone Book in large type.**

(Phase II)

11. **IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON ENSURE THAT ADEQUATE FACILITATIVE SERVICES (E.G., TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION) BE AVAILABLE FOR SENIOR CITIZENS.**

11a. **That the seniors' bus pass program be reviewed (financial implications, impact upon seniors) with older people and reassessed to determine its current appropriateness and importance for seniors.** *(Action - Transportation Department)*

(Phase I)

11b. **That, in the allocation of funds for the transportation of seniors, higher priority be given to D.A.T.S.** *(Action - Transportation Department)*

(Phase I)

11c. **That the City of Edmonton ensure a level of service appropriate for D.A.T.S. to continue to meet the special needs of disabled seniors, as well as other physically disabled persons.** *(Action - Transportation Department)*

(Phase I)

11d. **That community-based services offered as alternates to institutions (in auxiliary hospitals and nursing homes, and social day care) be strongly encouraged to budget appropriately for D.A.T.S. service.** *(Action - Transportation Department)*

(Phase I)

11e. **That the Transportation Department continue to investigate and implement appropriate new technologies as they relate to the transportation needs of seniors.**

(Phase II)

11f. **That the Transportation Department explore means to provide a solution to the need for longer walk signals for seniors.**

(Phase II)

11g. **That the City of Edmonton maintain the current unlimited use of local telephone service for all subscribers (and not implement "Local Measured Service").** *(Action - Edmonton Telephones)*

(Phase I)

12. **IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON ELIMINATE UNIVERSAL SUBSIDIES FOR OLDER PEOPLE, WHEN THE SUBSIDY IS BASED SOLELY UPON AGE, IN FAVOUR OF ADEQUATE SUBSIDIES WHERE NEED HAS BEEN DEMONSTRATED.**

12a. **That the City of Edmonton adopt a common method of assessing need for seniors' eligibility for subsidies and discounts.** *(Action - Parks and Recreation, Social Services, Transportation Departments)*

(Phase II)

13. **IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON URGE THE PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS TO ALLOCATE A LARGER SHARE OF THEIR BUDGETS FOR COMMUNITY-BASED PREVENTIVE AND FACILITATIVE SERVICES.**

13a. **That the City of Edmonton urge the Provincial Government to provide increased provincial funding to expand preventive social services offered through the Family and Community Support Services Program.** *(Action - Social Services Department)*

(Phase I)

13b. **That the City of Edmonton urge the Provincial Government to recognize the need for increased provincial funding to expand services, including support services, offered by the Edmonton Home Care Program.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health)*

(Phase I)

13c. **That the City of Edmonton stress to the Provincial Government the need for increased funding to support multi-disciplinary well-elderly clinics where health assessments, education, screening, and consultation can be offered to older individuals.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Social Services Departments)*

(Phase I)

13d. **That the City of Edmonton urge the Provincial Government to provide increased funding to enable development and expansion of the outreach component provided by public health nurses and Senior Centres.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health)*

(Phase I)

13e. **That the City of Edmonton continue to present strongly the need for additional funding for D.A.T.S. to the appropriate Provincial and Federal Departments.** *(Action - Transportation Department)*

(Phase I)

13f. **That the City of Edmonton negotiate with the Provincial Government a direct funding arrangement for D.A.T.S. to provide service for out-patient and community based geriatric programs offered at local facilities.** *(Action - Transportation Department)*

(Phase I)

13g. **That the Social Services Department, Greater Edmonton Foundation, and Edmonton Board of Health monitor the support requirements of Lodge residents and if requirements continue to increase, examine options for support provisions, including methods of obtaining increased funding from the Provincial Government as part of the community-based aspect of home care.**

(Phase I)

14. **IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON PERMIT MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTS TO INCLUDE IMPLEMENTATION OF APPROVED STRATEGIES AS IDENTIFIABLE ITEMS IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET PROCESS.**

14a. **That the interdepartmental committee of Civic personnel aided by senior citizens, when appropriate, (Strategy 3a) be the mechanism for this assistance and consultation.** *(Action - All Departments and Authorities)*

(Phase II)

14b. **That a major review of Municipal programs and services for seniors be scheduled by the City Manager for 1994.** *(Action - Social Services, Transportation, Telephones, Corporate Services, Parks and Recreation, Police Departments, Edmonton Public Library, Edmonton Board of Health, Greater Edmonton Foundation)*

(Phase III)

14c. **That a conference/seminar/workshop be held with senior's organizations and agencies serving seniors to discuss the implications of the proposed recommendations and strategies within three months of approval of this report.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Edmonton Public Library, Social Services, Transportation, Parks and Recreation and Police Departments)*

(Phase I)

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PHOTO COURTESY OF PASTORAL CARE, MICHENER CENTRE

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EDMONTON SENIORS 2000

STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE

I. THE CHALLENGE

Edmonton, like the rest of Canada, is growing older demographically. Our City is expected to have about 70,000 people over the age of 65 by the turn of the century. The number of individuals 65 years of age or older (defined as "seniors" for the purpose of statutory benefits) is growing at a rate three times that of the general population.

Many people are retiring at younger ages, and expecting to spend their "senior" years as meaningful, contributing members of the community. Seniors, through their increasing numbers and their intrinsic abilities, are becoming a recognized and vital economic and political force in society.

Older people, however, do get ill and have health and other problems. Studies indicate that 85% of people over 65 years of age have one or more identifiable disease[1]. Approximately 39% of older Canadians require some assistance with at least one activity of daily living[2]. Notwithstanding these physical limitations, the overwhelming majority (80%) of seniors are capable of independent living and making decisions about their own care[3]. Maintaining ones physical and social health are important to those who desire to remain functioning members of society.

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[1] Duggan Health Centre. 1988. Senior Adult Wellness Program: Initial Proposal. Duggan Health Centre, Edmonton Board of Health.

[2] Statistics Canada and Department of the Secretary of State of Canada. 1986. Report of the Canadian Health and Disability Survey 1983-1984. Minister of Supply and Services, Ottawa.

[3] Health Services and Promotion Branch. 1986. Aging: Shifting the Emphasis (working paper). Health and Welfare Canada: Ottawa.

The potential of escalating health care costs associated with the increasing older population is becoming a concern to government, particularly in view of a declining birthrate and a realization that there will be fewer taxpayers to pay the costs of care of our older population. A broader emphasis than in the past, giving attention to those who are functioning, and particularly to primary prevention[4], is currently being viewed by the Federal Government as a means to reduce the overall incidence of illness and thereby limit increases to the costs of health care. Proposals to shift the focus of care from expensive institutions to community based services are seeing favour at the Provincial level[5]. Both of these approaches are coincident with and lend support to the concepts of improving lifestyles and making post-retirement years productive for more people.

Concurrently, the image of the older person is undergoing a transformation. No longer is retirement regarded as the end of one's productive life; no longer are seniors stereotyped as "old and feeble". An individual's "senior" years are seen as a new chapter of life's experiences. Yet, while knowledge is increasing, much remains to be understood about the complex process of aging and the impact of biological, emotional, psychological, social, political, and economic factors.

As the result of these developments, and a desire on the part of the City of Edmonton to anticipate the needs of seniors and have the most appropriate means available to address their requirements, the Edmonton Seniors 2000 Project was initiated to plan the framework for municipally supported services for older people to the turn of the century. The Project Committee, composed of staff appointed by City of Edmonton Departments and Authorities and citizen volunteers (retired, semi-retired, and full-time employed), collaborated in a unique partnership to review existing municipal and municipally supported services in order to propose the most appropriate seniors services for the future and help ensure City services utilized by older people are accessible to them. The process

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[4] Health Services Promotion Branch. 1986. Aging: Shifting the Emphasis (working paper). Health and Welfare Canada: Ottawa.
Epp, Jake. 1986. Achieving Health For All: A Framework for Health Promotion. Health and Welfare Canada: Ottawa.

[5] Mirosh, Diane. 1988. A New Vision for Long Term Care: Meeting the Need. Committee on Long Term Care for Senior Citizens. Government of Alberta: Edmonton.

ensure City Services utilized by older people are accessible to them. The process employed by the Committee to determine the recommendations and strategies contained in this report is included in the Appendix.

A. THE TASK

Permissive authority to conduct the Edmonton Seniors 2000 Project was given by the City Manager, in consultation with his General Managers, at the May 22nd, 1987, meeting of the City's Management Team. In addition, Edmonton Board of Health, Edmonton Public Library, and Edmonton Ambulance Authority were invited, and agreed, to participate as partners in the project.

The objectives of the Project were to:

- familiarize the elected decision-makers and the Administration of the City of Edmonton with the needs of older people;

- involve the seniors' community in identifying options for those municipal services which affect their lives;

- develop a philosophy for the City with respect to services for older people;

- develop a coordinated approach to meet the service needs of this growing portion of the population; and

- facilitate awareness of the needs of older people within City Departments and Authorities.

B. DEMOGRAPHICS

By the year 2,000, projections[6] are that 70,000 Edmontonians will be 65 years of age or older (an increase of 50% over the number of seniors recorded in the 1987 Civic Census). The number of seniors aged 65 to 74 years is forecast to increase by 42%; the number of people aged 75 to 84 years is predicted to grow by 61%; and those aged 85+ by 70%. These figures contrast with the projected 17% overall increase in the City's general population from 1987 to the turn of the century.

The highest concentrations of older persons in Edmonton currently live in inner city communities immediately north and south of the North Saskatchewan River[7]. Towards the newer suburban communities, the concentration of seniors decreases in a concentric pattern. The highest concentrations of seniors living alone are in these same inner City communities. This latter observation is important because the National Council of Welfare indicates that poverty amongst Canadian seniors living alone remains high (although this situation has improved somewhat since 1980). In 1986, the poverty rate for individuals 65 years of age and older living alone was 43% (46% for females; 32% males). Indeed, 42% of all Edmonton seniors who receive the Federal Old Age Security Pension also receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement, meaning they have little or no income other than these transfer payments[8].

Within the 65 to 74 year age group, 1987 census data indicate that 44% of seniors are male, 56% female. The ratio of female to male seniors increases with age; in the 75 to 84 year age group, 61% are female; and in the 85+ age cohort, 68% are female. The gender difference is projected to be somewhat less pronounced by the year 2000: in the 65 to 74 age group, 50% female; in the 75 to 84 age group, 55% female; and in the 85+ age group, 65% female.

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[6] Edmonton Population Forecast, May 1988

[7] Social Demographic Information. 1988. Information and Evaluation Section, Housing and Social Planning Branch, Edmonton Social Services

[8] Source: Senior Citizens Secretariat, as at December, 1987.

As the population ages, needs change. As this occurs, will resources and support services be able to assist older individuals in the traditional ways? Are there alternative plans to consider? Can older people themselves, contribute effectively towards their own well-being? How can this be accomplished?

C. SERVICE JURISDICTIONS

Over the years, the Federal, Provincial, and Municipal Governments have developed a wealth of services and programs for people 65 years of age and older as they have for other groups in the population. The majority of these supports ensure that the basic needs of most older people are met: minimum income, adequate housing, and comprehensive health care.

The Federal Government provides income maintenance programs, both universal and means tested, including the following:

- Old Age Security Pension -- a monthly, indexed pension available to all individuals 65 years of age or older who meet Canadian residency requirements.

- Guaranteed Income Supplement -- available to Old Age Security pensioners who have little or no income other than the basic pension.

- Spouse's Allowance -- available to a person 60 to 65 years of age who is married to someone receiving the Guaranteed Income Supplement if the couple's combined income is small.

- Canada Pension -- a compulsory pension plan requiring contributions from most employed people aged 18 to 65 years (and voluntarily until age 70) earning more than a set minimum. Contributors are eligible for retirement pension after a minimum one year contribution and attainment of retirement age (minimum 60 years of age to 70 years of age maximum). The pension

amount is dependent upon the length of time in the plan and the amount contributed.

The Federal Government also provides cost-sharing funds to the provinces for health care, social services, and housing programs, and supports local senior' initiatives through the New Horizons and Seniors' Independence Programs.

The Provincial Government operates the Alberta Assured Income Plan which provides an additional financial support (1989 maximum is $95/month) for older people who receive the Federal Guaranteed Income Supplement. Both the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan and the Alberta Blue Cross Plan are premium-free to persons over 65 years of age in Alberta. In addition, an Extended Health Benefits Program begins when a person turns 65 and is automatic under the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan. Coverage, which also extends to an individual's spouse or dependents, includes eyeglasses, dental care, hearing aids, and medical supplies. Long term care in Auxiliary Hospitals and Nursing Homes is another important Provincial service for older people.

The Provincial Government also maintains a housing program for older citizens, including subsidized self-contained units (apartments and cottages), and cost-shares the operation of Lodges with municipalities. Additional housing services for seniors include the Senior Citizen Renter Assistance Grant, property tax reduction benefits, and the Senior's Home Improvement Program.

In reviewing municipal services for seniors, the Project Committee found that the majority were designed to promote and maintain older people as active community members (e.g., Senior Centres, Lodges, information and referral services, counselling groups, D.A.T.S., outreach services, home-maker services). Many preventive and facilitative programs and services are operated through municipalities with cost-sharing or partial grants from the Federal and Provincial Governments. Preventive health services are totally funded by the Province through Boards of Health; Family and Community Support Services (F.C.S.S.) are jointly funded by the Province and the municipality to prcmote the social well-being of citizens, including older individuals.

D. THE FUTURE

Bearing in mind the demographic projections and jurisdictional boundaries, the Project Committee faced the challenge of designing a municipal blueprint for action to meet the needs of seniors to the year 2000. Where should the money available for seniors' services be spent? Who should actually provide the funding? What principles should guide Edmonton's decision-makers?

The Committee recognizes that the increasing numbers of older people will increase demands on municipal services for seniors and therefore increase costs. Holding costs of services to a constant dollar level, even with inflation increases, will not meet increasing needs. The City of Edmonton must allocate its recources appropriately to meet needs of this segment of the population. The Committee believes that its recommendations and strategies will, over the long term, keep additional costs of the City to a minimum.

The Committee also recognized that comprehensive and high quality health care services, including long-term care and financial support, are essential for the older population. These supports, however, are mandated through Federal and Provincial initiatives. The Committee therefore agreed that, for maximum impact, municipal efforts should be directed towards promotion of health and well-being in the broadest sense, as well as illness and problem prevention, to enable older individuals to remain active, independent, and contributing members of society for as long as possible.

II. THE FRAMEWORK

Recently released Provincial and Federal documents on health care and social problems have demonstrated the considerable investment of resources in the care of older people. However, "at present, with the exception of income support programs, the majority of funding and program development for seniors appears to be related to services for the small proportion of older persons who are frail and disabled".[9] The Project Committee, meanwhile, was concerned about the quality of life for the entire older population, not only for the minority of seniors (estimated at 15 to 20%) with major problems.

The Committee invested considerable effort reviewing current health, social service, recreation, and other relevant concepts in order to understand their implications for seniors' services. As a result, the Committee concluded that the City should foster "wellness" and community-based preventive and facilitative services to support and improve the overall functioning of Edmonton's senior population. Committee members also felt that these approaches could forestall or reduce the need for costly long term care.

The following are the concepts considered by the Committee to be essential in this municipal service plan for seniors.

A. WELLNESS

Wellness implies that an individual self-sustains optimum levels of functioning, the Committee's goal for Edmonton's older citizens. Wellness is influenced by an individual's lifestyle, social and physical environment, organization of the helping professionals, and human biology. The first three factors impinge upon the mandate of the Project Committee; the last is beyond the influence of the Committee.

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[9] 1988.The Preventive Approach, Preventive Programs and Alberta's Seniors, A Discussion Paper prepared with the assistance of the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee on Senior Citizens, Senior Citizens Secretariat, Alberta Social Services and Community Health: Edmonton iii

> Wellness is a way of living that involves having purpose and meaning in life and accepting responsibility for one's own circumstances. Wellness is an active process that differs from the achievement of good health, is multidimensional, and exists on a separate continuum from the health-sickness continuum.[10]

The Committee concurred that "achieving wellness" is both a personal and a social responsibility. It continues over time, demands personal action and initiative, is related to the processes of learning and development, and is a response to an individual's potential for personal growth"[11]. The Committee, therefore, sought to recommend actions to achieve wellness for older Edmontonians and to provide all seniors with the opportunity of making choices and gaining satisfaction from living.

B. PREVENTIVE SERVICES

Prevention implies knowledge of factors which cause a particular social, health or other condition to exist, and then, effecting the reduction or elimination of these factors. Prevention entails developing the personal and social competencies of older people and modifying social systems to meet their needs more effectively. Thus, through preventive services, seniors receive support in enhancing their quality of life and attaining "wellness".

Preventive services are usually classified into three levels of intervention. Primary preventive services are those which prevent problems from occurring and include Senior Centres, seniors' educational programs, planned recreational activities, health screening, and planning strategies for seniors' services. Secondary preventive services are those which permit early intervention before a crisis is reached and can include services such as information and referral

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[10] 1987. A Proposal for Integrating Health and Wellness into Nursing Practice, Alberta Association of Registered Nurses, 1

[11] Op. cit.,2

services, early intervention and certain types of counselling. Lastly, tertiary preventive services inhibit the worsening of chronic problems (e.g., institutions that care for non-ambulatory, frail older people).

Both primary and secondary preventive services are seen as within the purview of the City. Primary preventive services confirm wellness and provide teaching/reinforcement of self-directed activities. Secondary preventive services reduce the risk of problems, protect wellness, and through supports stabilize/improve problem areas which are not chronic. Tertiary preventive services for deteriorating health and social problems, however, are seen by the Committee to be the responsibility of other government jurisdictions.

C. FACILITATIVE SERVICES

Facilitative services provide access and connections for seniors to participate in activities or support programs which enrich their lives. Facilitative services link older people, as well as other citizens, with preventive and other services within the community.

A financial subsidy for seniors may be associated with facilitative services -- e.g., Edmonton Transit (Seniors Transit Pass Program) and D.A.T.S. (Disabled Adult Transportation System). Users of both these services pay only nominal fees as a result of municipal subsidies.

Facilitative services do not focus on the well-being of seniors, but by linking older people with preventive and other services, facilitative services may reduce stress and increase mobility, both desirable for maintaining independent lifestyles. The Project Committee also defined telephone services as facilitative services (as well as essential and emergency services) since they provide seniors with a primary means of contact for social relationships.

D. OTHER CONCEPTS

Mutual Aid[12] and Self-help mean seniors helping seniors, supporting one another emotionally and sharing experiences, ideas, and information. Mutual aid and self-help assist seniors to live interdependently in the community while still maintaining independence.

Community Development is a process which encourages seniors to participate in the decision-making which affects their lives. The Committee believes that the City should facilitate community development through involving seniors in planning, implementing, and evaluating services designed for their use.

Community-based services are those located within the neighbourhood or community for ease of access (by seniors), in contrast to services which are centralized and less accessible.

Self-care[13] is the decisions taken and practices adopted by older people to maintain mental, emotional, and physical health through personal actions. The Project Committee believes that the City of Edmonton should encourage seniors to make appropriate lifestyle choices.

E. THE PREMISES

The Edmonton Seniors 2000 Project Committee was composed of individuals of diverse backgrounds, professional experiences, and ages. Despite such varied representation, Committee members worked cooperatively and productively in a growing atmosphere of mutual understanding and trust. As a result, the group readily reached consensus regarding the basic beliefs and assumptions about older people which would guide members in all deliberations.

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[12] Epp, Jake. 1986. Achieving Health for All: A Framework for Health Promotion, National Health and Welfare: Ottawa.

[13] Ibid.

Committee members feel it is essential that these beliefs and assumptions be explicit for decision-makers and the Administration of the City of Edmonton to understand the intentions of the recommendations and strategies presented in this report.

STATEMENT OF UNDERLYING PHILOSOPHY

Older people have capabilities and the capacity for growth and creativity. Seniors, as do all citizens, have a primary responsibility to utilize their capabilities to maintain themselves as full members of the community. Older people must make their own choices and be part of the decision-making processes which affect their own, as well as the lives of all citizens.

In addition to basic human needs for appropriate food, clothing, and shelter, older people have an equally important need for purposeful social relationships. This latter need is primarily met by family, friends, and significant others recognized by the individual. When older people have insufficient personal supports or resources, formal services may be required through government, voluntary, or for-profit agencies.

Services should be "preventive and/or facilitative"[14] in nature and primarily designed to support an individual in his/her social and physical environment. These supports should be provided as a means of maintaining, or ensuring that older people can return to and function in their normal surroundings if at all possible.

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[14] The Project Committee circulated information about the concept of "preventive and facilitative" services to all City Departments and involved Authorities. The concepts were concurred with by all Departments and Authorities.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

All Edmontonians are responsible, within their own capabilities and with assistance from family, friends, and other personal supports, to maintain themselves as active participants in the community. The City of Edmonton encourages its older citizens to continue to fulfil their responsibility in this regard and to maintain "healthy" lifestyles. The City should, therefore, primarily direct its services to foster wellness and to encourage older people to look actively after their own needs.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

Senior citizens have the right to access services available to all citizens. When the City of Edmonton supports services delivered by the Administration or by others specifically for older people, the following principles shall apply:

- Services shall promote wellness in the broadest sense and prevent or reduce disorders, disabilities, disease, and dysfunction, and facilitate independent community living.

- Services shall primarily affect the general population, but when necessary, special services may assist the reintegration of individuals with particular needs back into the community.

- Service deliverers shall treat individuals with dignity and respect and recognize the right of the individual to accept or reject the service offered.

- Services shall improve the quality of life.

- Services shall be proactive, and provide creative solutions and innovative approaches.

- Services shall promote the abilities and skills of individuals and recognize their limitations.

- Services shall be aimed at reducing environmental stress and assist individuals and groups to manage stress effectively.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS,STRATEGIES,IMPLEMENTATION

The Project Committee gathered a wealth of information about seniors' services from City Departments, agencies serving older persons, and older people, themselves. This data was then reviewed, analyzed, and discussed by Committee members. Many of the suggestions for new services or service improvements were specific in nature; however, the Committee discovered that several general themes recurred consistently.

The Project Committee therefore decided that recommendations to the City of Edmonton should establish the framework for Departments to conduct strategic planning to meet the needs of older people. What follows are fourteen recommendations designed to accomplish this goal. Within each recommendation is a series of strategies to be considered by Departments. Thus, the Committee has determined it can best provide direction and that the specifics of actions to be taken must necessarily be the responsibility of Departments and Authorities.

Strategies are placed into three implementation phases. Phase I - implementation should begin as soon as possible after approval is given, realizing that a number of years may be required before they are fully achieved. Phase II - implementation should begin two to three years after approval. Phase III, these strategies may be implemented later than two to three years.

IV. BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION

1. **IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON EMPHASIZE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT APPROACHES IN MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE INCREASING SENIOR POPULATION AND INVOLVE OLDER PERSONS IN THE PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, AND DELIVERY OF PROGRAMS.**

"Community development can be tentatively defined as a process designed to create conditions of economic and social progress for the whole community with its active participation and the fullest possible reliance on the community's initiative".[15] Community development encourages involvement of a broad cross-section of people in identifying their needs and in problem solving, and fosters collaboration in both attitudes and practices between those who have power or authority in a community and those who do not.[16] Community development is, then, an ideal process to involve older people, as well as all citizens, in democratic and cooperative problem solving.

The Committee views processes similar to that employed in the Edmonton Seniors 2000 Project (see Appendix) as effective community development/involvement approaches for planning programs with older people. The Administration entered into a partnership with retired and older individuals; seniors were involved in developing the methodology, gathering information, interfacing with age peers, identifying and determining service delivery concepts, and recommending appropriate action. This approach, or one similar, could be adapted and utilized by City Departments and Authorities. Strategies contained elsewhere in this report suggest a number of approaches for the involvement of older people in the development and actual delivery of services to meet their needs.

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[15] United Nations, 1955. Social Progress through Community Development, United Nations: New York. 6

[16] 1986."Conceptual Framework for Practice", Program Support Services, Edmonton Social Services

Each Department or Authority would determine whether community development approaches for the planning, development and delivery of their programs should proceed only for services for seniors and involve only seniors or whether a more holistic approach, involving other populations and/or other services would be effective.

The Project Committee therefore proposes the following strategy:

1a. **That Municipal Departments and Authorities prepare plans for their services which impact upon seniors, with input from seniors, and where appropriate utilize a community development approach in their planning.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Edmonton Public Library, Social Services, Parks and Recreation, Transportation and Police Departments)*

Phase I Implementation

Implicit in this strategy is the need for a review mechanism. The Project Committee proposes that Departments report back to Council on their progress towards implementation of this strategy as outlined in strategy 14b.

Departments and Authorities such as Social Services, Parks and Recreation, and Edmonton Board of Health currently operate some of their services in a community development mode. Other Departments and Authorities -- e.g., Transportation, through aiding community groups to establish volunteer transportation services -- could move in this direction. In all situations in which the community development process has not been extended to seniors programs, the Project Committee suggests:

1b. **That, where appropriate and feasible, Civic Departments examine existing service delivery requirements and reallocate resources for older people from direct service delivery to community development approaches.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Parks and Recreation, Social Services, Police and Transportation Departments).*

Phase II Implementation

The Social Services Department, for example, proposed and is implementing further movement towards this direction for 1989 in its "Services for Seniors" program. Careful review of the impacts of direct service reductions must be made before implementation of this strategy by any Department or Authority.

Community development is predicated upon the active participation of the "whole" community to problem solve on a self-help basis. To ensure that all seniors interest groups are represented in the process, the Project Committee believes:

1c. **That Civic Departments and Authorities include seniors with special needs (e.g., those who are disabled and of ethnic minorities) in planning and implementing programs for seniors.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Edmonton Public Library, Social Services, Parks and Recreation, Transportation and Police Departments.)*

Phase I Implementation

The Project Committee's workshop for individuals representing ethno-cultural groups identified some special program needs for people who are relatively recent immigrants to Canada. Many of these older people experience language, financial, and service access difficulties which limit their ability to function effectively in Edmonton. The Committee therefore suggests:

1d. **That Civic Departments assist seniors' ethno-cultural associations to establish mutual support groups and access services of established organizations where feasible.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Social Services and Parks and Recreation Departments.)*

Phase I Implementation

One other special seniors' constituency is comprised of residents in Lodges administered by the Greater Edmonton Foundation. Some of these older adults need support to maintain their independence, but still are capable of participating in a community development process. The Greater Edmonton Foundation is committed to establishing resident councils at each of their Lodges and apartment complexes in Edmonton. These councils will provide residents with an opportunity to participate in the management of residential

projects, and thus be part of the decision-making processes which affect their lives.

1e. That the City of Edmonton continue to support in principle, efforts of the Greater Edmonton Foundation aimed at developing residents councils in Lodges. *(Action - Social Services Department.)*

Phase I Implementation

2. IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT EACH CITY OF EDMONTON DEPARTMENT AND AUTHORITY DEVELOP OR ENHANCE STRATEGIC PLANS IN RESPONSE TO THE NEEDS OF SENIORS.

Each Department and Authority should incorporate the projected service demands of the increasing senior population into its strategic planning process. The community development approach may be helpful in this regard. This means that each Department should review current programs and services for seniors with seniors, be prepared to change inefficient or less appropriate approaches, and look for new and innovative responses to seniors' concerns. Strategic planning should also imply consideration of increasing service to reflect growth of the senior population, as well as the adaptation of generic services to more specifically address seniors' requirements. Built into the strategic planning process must also be an evaluative mechanism to ensure that municipal staff monitor changes occurring in the senior population and how municipal services will be affected by these changes.

The Project Committee has provided assistance to Departments and Authorities through guidelines in the form of statements of underlying philosophy, policy, and principles. However, frequently, planning for seniors occurs in isolation. While certain services and programs may appropriately be designed only or primarily for older adults (e.g., Senior Centres), others may provide greater social benefit if non-age specific (e.g., Care for Caregivers support groups, recreational programs for all ages). Whenever feasible, therefore, the

believes that programming for seniors should aim to include older citizens in the mainstream of society, and:

2a. That the strategic planning processes of Civic Departments and Authorities include plans for services for older people, in view of the expected increase in numbers, as well as promote intergenerational program opportunities. *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Edmonton Public Library, Social Services and Parks and Recreation Departments.)*

Phase I Implementation

Edmonton Public Library is a major source of enjoyment, as well as continuing education, for many older people. However, the development of additional activities would provide mobile seniors with further opportunities for enhancing their quality of life. The Project Committee therefore proposes:

2b. That, in strategic planning, Edmonton Public Library explore the concerns of seniors for specific programs, such as book clubs and literary discussion groups, encourage programs for and by seniors and the staffing requirements involved.

Phase II Implementation

3. IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON PLAN, DEVELOP, AND IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS FOR SENIORS IN AN INTEGRATED (TOWARD CONSISTENT GOALS) AND COORDINATED (WORKING TOGETHER) MANNER.

While each civic Department should have a strategic plan to ensure adequate services for seniors, these individual plans must be coordinated and integrated with one another to ensure all the needs of seniors are met, to discourage unnecessary duplication of efforts, and to help ensure consistent goals. In addition, there are many problems and concerns which are interdepartmental in nature, as well as many emerging issues particularly affecting older people, which have yet to be addressed fully by municipal services. The Project Committee therefore suggests the implementation of the following strategy:

3a. That the City of Edmonton establish an interdepartmental[17]/citizen committee of civic personnel and older people to share resource information and be proactive in examining and proposing solutions to issues affecting older people (e.g., health promotion, bereavement adjustment, substance abuse, elder abuse). *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Social Services, Parks and Recreation, Transportation Departments as "core" members; others as required)*

Phase II Implementation

The issues mentioned in strategy 3a are not the exclusive purview of one Department, but rather impinge upon the mandate of several (e.g., Ambulance Authority, Board of Health, Police Department, Social Services Department, Transportation Department). The Project Committee sees the approach utilized in the Edmonton Seniors 2000 Project as being beneficial to City Departments and Authorities as well as citizens. As a result, the Committee members feel these issues can be examined more effectively and efficiently through an interdepartmental approach which teams older citizens with City personnel. A continuation of the Edmonton Seniors 2000 Committee approach or a similar structure to address specific needs is recommended. The role of this committee could be to recommend to, advise and consult with Municipal Departments and Authorities and to share resource information.

Wellness programs acquaint seniors with the factors that affect their health. This, in turn, assists older people in preserving their independence and well-being. Currently, a multidisciplinary team of health and social service professionals and seniors are developing a proposal to initiate a wellness clinic at the Duggan Health Centre, Edmonton Board of Health. Implementation of this program would provide a unique opportunity for a team of professionals and members of the community (i.e., public health nurse, nutritionist, dental hygienist, pharmacist, social worker, volunteers, and seniors) to work and plan together, learn from each other's expertise and perspectives, gain knowledge in the area of gerontology, and evaluate this alternative method of promoting the well-being of seniors. The Committee therefore proposes:

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[17] Interdepartmental includes Civic Departments and Authorities.

3b. That interdepartmental wellness programs for seniors be piloted (emphasizing coordination, integration, exchange of information, and accessibility to other programs). *(Action - Parks and Recreation and Social Services Departments and Edmonton Board of Health.)*

Phase II Implementation

The Edmonton Board of Health's Home Care Program delivers home health and related care (e.g., nursing, homemakers, physiotherapy) to individuals who have a medical need. Edmonton Social Services, Services for Seniors builds upon individuals abilities and in some instances provides household supports to individuals who do not require medical monitoring, but need some assistance to live independently. These two programs are based upon different premises, have different eligibility assessments, and different fee structures. The Project Committee suggests that many professionals and older people do not always understand the differences between these two programs but rather feel that greater cooperation is required to ensure that older individuals can readily refer between the two support programs, with a minimum of change and "gatekeeping", dependent upon health and social need status. The Project Committee therefore urges:

3c. That the Edmonton Board of Health and the Social Services Department clarify and interpret their Home Care and Services for Seniors programs, respectively, for both professionals and older people, particularly in the area of provision of support services.

Phase I Implementation

There are a number of community Senior Centres providing integrated recreational programs and social services for older people. The Project Committee wishes to ensure that the Parks and Recreation and Social Services Departments prevent confusion and frustration among these organizations by recognizing the interdependence of their services for the well-being of seniors and developing a coordinated approach for financing organizations offering such programs. The Committee proposes:

3d. That a suitable mechanism be developed by the Parks and Recreation and Social Services Departments to ensure adequate and appropriate financial support for agencies and services where there is a perceived overlap in recreation and social services.

Phase II Implementation

The majority of seniors prefer to remain in the familiar surroundings of their own homes as long as possible. Families frequently want their older members at home. However, this means that family members are often the sole or primary care-givers for seniors with health and/or mobility problems. These family members may be an elderly spouse or adult children who may themselves have a limited capacity to provide needed care because of other responsibilities. The availability of respite services would alleviate the cumulative stress of care-giving and improve the physical health and psychosocial well-being of the care-giver. This, in turn, would make the care-giving experience more mutually beneficial for giver and receiver. In addition, many care-givers would benefit from information which would assist them in helping their senior(s) and in accessing available supports.

A community agency committee, the "Care for Care Givers Committee", with representation from the Edmonton Board of Health and Social Services Department, among many others, is currently examining the issues relating to respite care and developing recommendations for needed improvements. The Project Committee therefore proposes:

3e. That the Social Services Department and the Edmonton Board of Health work in collaboration with community agencies participating in the Edmonton "Care for Care-Givers Committee" to explore the feasibility of implementing appropriate recommendations of the committee.

Phase I Implementation

The Project Committee also believes that sufficient information about needed services makes them more readily accessible. The Committee therefore emphasizes the necessity to publicize the services and programs available for seniors to the Edmonton community and suggests:

3f. **That opportunities for coordinating (consistent, cost-effective, understandable) Municipal publicity on senior's services on a city-wide basis be explored.**
(Action - coordinated by Corporate Communications.)

Phase I Implementation

Such coordination for all Departments and Authorities would help ensure comprehensive service information is available for seniors in a cost effective manner.

4. **IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON AND SENIORS ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES SERVING SENIORS PROMOTE AND DEVELOP COMMUNICATION NETWORKS TO FACILITATE MORE EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY.**

In addition to an integrated interdepartmental approach to seniors programs, there is a need to foster communication networks among the City and senior organizations and agencies serving seniors. A multiplicity of Edmonton agencies deal with seniors, each offering special services and programs. In order to promote a multidisciplinary approach to meet seniors needs and to avoid duplication of effort, effective means must be designed for information exchange among these groups.

Modern technology offers the means to develop a network among seniors organizations, agencies providing seniors services, and the City. The practicality of such a network, and its financial implications (both developmental and operational), should be reviewed by the City, agencies, and seniors organizations. The Committee therefore proposes:

4a. **That the City of Edmonton explore with major seniors organizations and agencies serving seniors the feasibility of developing computer links between City Departments and these organizations for inquiries, information provision and exchange, and space bookings, as well as for investigation of a "common-newsletter".** *(Action - Social Services, Parks and Recreation, Transportation Departments, Computer Resources.)*

Phase II Implementation

Currently, some Senior Centres and Community Leagues offer special services for older people (e.g., snow shovelling, grass cutting). These services however, are not universally available throughout Edmonton, nor are they well-publicized. The Project Committee therefore suggests:

4b. **That the Social Services and Parks and Recreation Departments encourage Senior Centres, Community Leagues, Schools and other organizations to develop and provide services like snow shovelling, grass cutting and other household supports on a neighbourhood basis.**

Phase I Implementation

Municipal Departments should act as facilitators, working with Senior Centres Community Leagues and other organizations to plan with seniors and implement these services.

Many representatives from seniors groups and many seniors, themselves, indicated to the Project Committee that there is a pressing need for additional counselling services for seniors in Edmonton. Assistance in dealing with life transitions, health, nutrition, financial and consumer matters are some of the areas mentioned where counselling is one appropriate approach.

4c. **That the Social Services Department and Edmonton Board of Health initiate a project to explore with Senior Centres, agencies serving older people, and older people themselves, the need for counselling services for seniors and develop plans to meet these needs.**

Phase II Implementation

People are vulnerable after the loss of a spouse or loved one. Ten to fifteen percent of seniors experience severe depression following spousal loss; bereavement can also be associated with a decline in physical health, mental health, and, in some cases, death. Churches and religious organizations are intensively involved in assisting individuals with the grieving process. Beyond specific religious programs, Edmonton's existing bereavement programs are limited[18], and outreach services (Edmonton Board of Health and a support person associated with four funeral homes) are particularly scarse.[19] In addition, the Bereavement Society of Alberta, located in Edmonton, promotes public awareness, public education, and advocacy for the development of bereavement resources. The Project Committee therefore urges:

4d. **That the Edmonton Board of Health and the Social Services Department facilitate the coordination (examine with community agencies, help develop) of institutional and community bereavement services within Edmonton, and that additional support be considered to improve/expand the outreach component of these programs.**

Phase II Implementation

Older people are different from one another; they have diverse interests, skills, and ambitions. Many seniors already are involved in recreational and educational activities to enrich their daily lives. However, there are many retired and semi-retired citizens who would benefit from leisure resource/education sessions to help them identify appropriate leisure-time pursuits. It is therefore proposed:

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[18] Catholic Social services, Cross Cancer Institute Loss Group, Living Through Loss Program of the Family Services Association, On Our Own Bereavement Resource Centre of the Y.W.C.A., and Youville Bereavement Group.

[19] Edmonton Board of Health also receives all death notices.

4e. That the Parks and Recreation Department offer, and encourage recreation groups and Community Leagues to offer, a variety of community-based recreational programs for seniors, including leisure/resource education sessions.

Phase II Implementation

In addition, the Project Committee strongly endorses not only recreational programs designed specifically for seniors, but also adult recreational programs which encourage the integration of seniors.

The majority of older people wish to live independently as long as physically and mentally possible, and perceive institutional living as a "last resort", only to be considered when they can no longer care for themselves. Many seniors, however, require some social support services to maintain their independence.

Just as government responded to the immediate housing needs of lower income older citizens, private developers are attempting to respond to the demands of a relatively affluent older population with a small range of housing unit types. However, few of these developments are planned with appropriate support services as an integral feature, nor are they designed to permit modifications in the future. Lack of such services can hinder some older people from obtaining needed accommodation and could force them to apply for space in Lodges and long term care centres.

Recently, several innovative housing options with related social supports have been piloted in Edmonton and other Canadian cities with considerable success (e.g., "home-sharing"[20], "granny-flats"[21]). These options promote the

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[20] Homesharing is a living arrangement involving two or more unrelated persons pooling their personal and financial resources to share a house or apartment. Each has private space and shares areas such as the living room and kitchen. (Tracy Hanes, "Home-Sharing", Discovery, March 1987, 22).

[21] A granny flat is a separate self-contained, removable unit that is installed as temporary living quarters for an elderly person usually in the yard of the single home of an adult son or daughter of the elderly person. The Government of Alberta will support pilot projects in Lethbridge and County of Parkland.

self-reliance of older people while maintaining closeness to family and/or peers for social and emotional support. The Project Committee therefore suggests:

4f. That the Social Services and Planning and Development Departments encourage, by acting as consultants to the private development industry, the provision of a wide range of housing options, with related social supports, for older people throughout Edmonton.

Phase II Implementation

Edmonton Meals-on-Wheels, a non-profit society supported financially by the City, provides hot meals for individuals who face difficulties with food purchasing and meal preparation. This service is essential for some older people to live independently. The meals, however, while including special diabetic, dentally soft, and no salt added diets, are non-reflective of the special needs of seniors requiring other therapeutic or ethnic diets.

Additional costs of addressing these needs could be shared among the City, the agency, and the service recipient. Ethnic communities could also be approached to explore and define needs, assist in developing diets, and identify potential volunteers. The Project Committee suggests:

4g. That the City of Edmonton request Edmonton Meals-on-Wheels to review the need for and feasibility of providing ethnic meals and therapeutic diets (e.g., cholesterol-free). *(Action - Social Services Department)*

Phase I Implementation

Meals-on-Wheels is anticipating opening its new commissary in early 1989 and could consider these strategies at that time.

Both the Federal and Provincial Governments have developed a number of funding programs for senior citizen groups that develop new, innovative projects to meet the needs of older people. Rather than rely only upon municipal funding, civic staff should be aware of the guidelines for obtaining grants under these programs and should work with seniors groups to assist them in preparing the necessary developmental plans to apply for funding. This will help ensure the

development, promotion, and consideration of local, innovative seniors initiatives for Federal and Provincial funding. The Committee therefore proposes:

4h. That City of Edmonton Departments work in cooperation with Federal and Provincial programs (e.g., New Horizons, Seniors Independence Program) to maximize the benefits of these programs to Edmonton's older population. *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Parks and Recreation and Social Services Departments.)*

Phase I Implementation

As previously noted, Edmonton has a large number of seniors organizations and agencies serving seniors. A forum comprised of all such groups would help ensure the dissemination of pertinent information to seniors, as well as enable the opinions of more seniors to be polled in matters influencing their well-being. Therefore, to ensure that seniors have a strong voice within the Edmonton community, the Project Committee urges:

4i. That the City of Edmonton support efforts of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired in establishing a committee of seniors groups to explore issues affecting older people and gather opinions of seniors. *(Action - All Departments and Authorities.)*

Phase I Implementation

5. IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON ENDORSE AND SUPPORT THE PRINCIPLE OF "SENIORS SERVING SENIORS" AND REALLOCATE APPROPRIATE RESOURCES FOR ITS EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION.

Social supports and mutual aid are important factors in permitting older people to live interdependently within a community while still maintaining independence. Seniors need to recognize how they can provide mutual aid to other seniors and facilitate a self-help approach to the problems of aging. The Project Committee therefore proposes:

5a. That positive marketing approaches be made toward seniors, recognizing different age and sub-groups of the "senior" population, to encourage reaching out to other seniors to provide mutual support. *(Action - Corporate Communications coordinate, all Departments and Authorities.)*

Phase I Implementation

In addition, the Committee suggests:

5b. That the City of Edmonton further encourage older people to invest efforts in aiding their age peers through volunteering in Municipal programs. *(Action - All Departments and Authorities.)*

Phase I Implementation

Although older people are the least likely age group to be victimized they are more fearful of crime than other age groups. This is probably due to the "physical, economic, and environmental factors associated with aging that increase vulnerability to criminal attack and that magnify the impact of victimization".[22] As a result, the Committee proposes:

5c. That the Edmonton Police Department enhance its role in assisting seniors in community programs by increasing volunteer resources and by actively recruiting older volunteers for its crime prevention programs.

Phase I Implementation

6. IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON INITIATE AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION FOSTERING A POSITIVE IMAGE OF OLDER PEOPLE.

It is important that the general public be aware of the realities of aging and the potential for seniors to remain active and productive members of the community, regardless of age. There are, however, many myths about aging and the

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[22] Fay Lomax Cook, Wesley G. Skogan, Thomas D. Cook, and George E. Antunes.1978. "Criminal Victimization of the Elderly: The Physical and Economic Consequences". The Gerontologist, 18, 338.

aged that portray seniors as second-class citizens, frequently with reduced capacities. The City should help ensure these myths and negative views of older people are dispelled. The Project Committee believes that implementation of an appropriate and well-designed public education program may be effective in this regard and suggests:

6a. That the City of Edmonton facilitate (encourage and help existing organizations) development of an education program for the public including: (i) understanding the aging and coping processes; (ii) an appreciation of the potential of seniors to assist themselves and other seniors; (iii) an emphasis on a healthy lifestyle and (iv) promotion of positive images of aging and the aged. *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Social Services and Parks and Recreation Departments.)*

Phase II Implementation

Delivery of the program may be the responsibility of an interagency/interdepartmental/intergovernmental committee or a designated agency.

It is equally important that seniors see themselves as valuable community members. Aging is a continual process; one's competency, creativity, and usefulness to self and others doesn't drastically alter upon reaching the age of 65. Seniors need to recognize the gradual changes that accompany aging, learn how to compensate for any difficulties, and discover what they can do to enhance their community. Therefore, the Project Committee stresses:

6b. That the City of Edmonton work with existing community groups to facilitate (encourage, help develop, explore, rent City facilities) continuing educational programs for seniors to provide information about the changes that occur during aging for successful aging. *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Edmonton Public Library, Parks and Recreation and Social Services Departments.)*

Phase I Implementation

Planning for one's retirement should begin many years before retirement actually occurs to help ensure the availability of adequate financial resources and to

prepare for the sudden increase in leisure time and other lifestyle changes. The Committee proposes:

6c. That the City of Edmonton Personnel Department extend its Pre-Retirement Training Program to employees aged 35 to 45 and their spouses.

Phase II Implementation

Older people participate more in organized social and recreational activities from September to May than during the summer months (June through August). Traditionally, however, Alberta's Senior Citizens Week is scheduled early in June when many seniors have already begun summertime activities. The Project Committee therefore suggests:

6d. That the City of Edmonton request the Provincial Government to revise the timing of Senior Citizens Week promotions to reflect more closely the activity peak of seniors' organizations; that such events be held in the early fall or mid-spring; and that Senior Citizens Week be used to educate citizens about the abilities and skills of older people. *(Action - Social Services and Parks and Recreation Departments.)*

Phase II Implementation

7. IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON WORK WITH SENIORS GROUPS TO EDUCATE AND ASSIST THEM IN PROMOTING AND PROTECTING THEIR HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY.

"Good health", taken for granted by most people in their younger years, is much more important to people in their older years. "Older adults are, however, faced with the task of adjusting to physical, mental, and social changes associated with the aging process and are at risk for developing chronic illnesses that may interfere with their chosen lifestyle".[23] The Project

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[23] Barbaro, Eol and L.E. Noyes, 1984. "A Wellness Program for a Life Care Community", The Gerontologist, 24, 568.

Committee feels that the health of older people should be promoted through the provision of supports for seniors. These supports should be allocated according to need, as for all age groups, within the general categories of: (i) healthy, independent persons; (ii) persons requiring some assistance in order to live independently ("assisted independence"); and (iii) fragile persons.

Safety and security are also important to older people. As aging occurs, individuals frequently cannot do everything they could when they were younger. Such losses bring increased feelings of vulnerability and dependence upon others, as well as a need to feel the immediate environment is safe and secure.

In addition, the Committee is concerned about the overall well-being of individuals residing in Lodges. The Senior Citizens Lodge Program, under provisions of the Senior Citizens Homes Act and master agreements between the Province of Alberta and municipalities, has been a residential program providing accommodation, meal, and laundry services since 1966. The Provincial Government subsidizes capital and administrative costs of Lodges and reimburses municipalities for 25% of the operating deficit. Lodges in the City of Edmonton are managed by the Greater Edmonton Foundation; costs to the City are budgeted at approximately $1,070,000 for 1989.

The mean age of Lodge residents in Alberta has increased from 80.6 to 81.3 between 1978 and 1986 and may continue to rise. If the Lodge population ages, it is likely that greater and more diverse supports will be required by residents. Currently, 20% of Alberta's Lodge residents receive services from Home Care Programs to enable them to remain in this community setting.

The Foundation has implemented the standards of the Alberta Senior Citizens Homes Association respecting medication administration, personal care, and food preparation. The Foundation has also initiated an "Assistance with Medication

Compliance" Program which will be implemented in all their Lodges and apartments. The Committee suggests:

7a. That the City of Edmonton continue to support the essential housing nature of the Senior Citizens Lodge Program while helping to ensure a good linkage with the Long Term Care System. *(Action - Social Services Department.)*

Phase II Implementation

The Committee notes that the Greater Edmonton Foundation is committed to strengthening the support services available for Lodge residents. With this in mind, the Foundation will begin to employ part-time activity coordinators to facilitate programs for their Lodge and apartment residents in 1989. Parks and Recreation could serve as a resource in this regard.

As noted above in this report, many older people fear for their security and relinquish some of their independence as the result of their fear. In order to alleviate the anxiety of seniors about crimes against their person and belongings, the Project Committee proposes:

7b. That the Edmonton Police Department assign a specific person to act as Liaison Officer for seniors.

Phase I Implementation

This person would not only be a bridge between the seniors community and the Police Department, but would also be conversant with current concerns of seniors, trends in criminal activity, and the limitations of what the Police Department can do for seniors and what seniors can do for themselves. This Police Liaison Officer would also interface with appropriate community agencies and assist in the establishment of social networks to support feelings of safety and security. With this in mind, the Committee suggests:

7c. That a Safety-Protection-Security Program for seniors be developed and be made part of the Neighbourhood Watch Program. *(Action - Police Department.)*

Phase II Implementation

The Police Liaison Officer for seniors, together with Senior Centres and Community Leagues, could research, plan, and implement this program.

The Committee also proposes:

7d. That the senior population density be taken into consideration when the Police Department decides to reallocate or expand Neighbourhood Foot Patrol.

Phase II Implementation

Such action could help reduce the fears of seniors and foster good public-police relations in these communities.

8. IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON PLAN, DEVELOP, AND IMPLEMENT TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR CITY PERSONNEL WORKING WITH OLDER PERSONS.

Older people wish to be treated with the dignity and respect due all Edmontonians; however, there may be age-related problems which make it difficult for civic personnel unaccustomed to working with older people to interact in their normal, helpful manner. The Transportation Department includes a module on special groups in its Transit Operator Training Program. Other Departments and Authorities could adapt this training concept to assist their personnel in working with older people. The Project Committee therefore proposes:

8a. That the Personnel Department, in cooperation with the Social Services Department and Edmonton Board of Health, develop and provide a program to educate employees on how to relate to older adults, their potential in society, the aging process, and how to deal with mental or physical deterioration related to aging in day-to-day business.

Phase II Implementation

The special needs of ethnic older people should also be included in the program content. The program should be available for all employees who come in contact with older adults.

Many individuals still have many misconceptions about older people. A positive presentation prepared for use with City employees and the public stressing the accomplishments of seniors would promote the integration of older people into the mainstream of society. The Committee therefore suggests:

8b. That the Personnel Department develop, or obtain, an information package and a presentation for use by City Departments and others about the abilities and skills of older people.

Phase II Implementation

A number of seniors making presentations to the Project Committee voiced concerns relating to their use of public transportation. These seniors felt that operators of City owned vehicles might not be able to respond to their distress needs. The Committee therefore suggests that all operators of City vehicles be trained to act as a "first line" of assistance for people in difficulty (e.g., an operator could radio home base about a senior in distress and describe the problem) and proposes:

8c. That the City of Edmonton explore the feasibility of expanding existing programs to train operators of City owned vehicles to stress awareness of seniors in difficulty and the appropriate ways to respond. *(Action - Personnel Department Coordinate; All Departments and Authorities operating vehicle fleets.)*

Phase I Implementation

9. IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON ENSURE THAT ALL CITY FACILITIES, WHENEVER FEASIBLE, ARE ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL PEOPLE, INCLUDING OLDER PEOPLE.

In May 1988, the Report of the Citizens Task Force for Physically Disabled Persons (a comprehensive series of recommendations) was received by City Council. Many recommendations dealt with the accessibility of municipal facilities and programs. The Project Committee endorses this report and urges:

9a. That the recommendations relating to access of City facilities and programs in the Report of the Citizens Task Force for Physically Disabled Persons be supported for implementation. *(Action - All Departments and Authorities.)*

Phase I Implementation

For the most part, older people prefer to use facilities close to their own residences; transportation to programs and services at a distance often poses accessibility problems. The Committee therefore suggests:

9b. That, where appropriate and feasible, municipally supported services and facilities, especially those designed specifically for older people, be community-based and accessible by public transit. *(Action - All Departments and Authorities.)*

Phase II Implementation

As a person ages, he or she may no longer be able to participate in recreational and social activities in the same manner as younger people. Special adaptations, however, may ease this transition and enable seniors to become full participants. The Project Committee recognizes the need to design services and facilities with this in mind and proposes:

9c. That City services and facilities be designed to ensure the comfort of older people (e.g., warmer pools at leisure centres, lighter weight doors, wider benches, appropriate chair height). *(Action - All Departments and Authorities)*

Phase II Implementation

9d. That the City of Edmonton explore the feasibility of developing standards of accessibility for Municipal buildings and facilities within the flexibility permitted by the Alberta Building Code. *(Action - All Departments and Authorities.)*

Phase III Implementation

and:

9e. That Edmonton Public Library continue to expand its provision of Large Print (soft cover when available) and Talking Books.

Phase III Implementation

Implementation of this strategy would alleviate the sometimes physically difficult lifting of heavy books for less strong seniors.

10. IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON FACILITATE THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES FOR SENIORS.

Older people have a variety of needs for information about services and programs for their leisure time (e.g., recreational, educational, social) as well as for maintaining their independence (e.g., support groups, counselling, services to assist with household chores). Although Edmonton has a generic telephone information and referral service for community and social service information, older people require more detailed information about a wider range of community supports. Seniors in Edmonton benefit from specialized information services provided by the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired which includes a walk-in service staffed by information specialists who provide immediate face-to-face referrals. However, not all older people are aware of the Society's program, nor does the program currently have the capability of providing services to all older Edmontonians. The Project Committee therefore suggests:

10a. **That the present central information and referral service of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired be expanded and strengthened to provide for the information needs of seniors in Edmonton.** *(Action - Social Services Department)*

Phase I Implementation

This service should be adequately funded and widely advertised.

The complexities of government services -- which Department offers what and the eligibility criteria for service -- frequently baffle older citizens. The Project Committee therefore proposes:

10b. **That a strategy relating to municipal resources (information about and method of accessing) for seniors be developed.** *(Action - Corporate Communications coordinate, All Departments and Authorities.)*

Phase II Implementation

The Committee, in recognizing that older people from various ethnic back-grounds may face severe difficulties in obtaining understandable information, also proposes:

10c. **That the City of Edmonton assist (provide the information for) ethno-cultural groups wishing to translate information on municipal services for seniors into various languages.** *(Action - Coporate Communications coordinate, All Departments and Authorities.)*

Phase II Implementation

In addition, the Project Committee suggests:

10d. **That the City of Edmonton through the media (public service announcements, community publications) inform seniors of and advertise those services, facilities, and special events, which affect older adults.** *(Action - Corporate Communications coordinate, All Departments and Authorities.)*

Phase II Implementation

In this way, older people will become acquainted with the numerous municipal services and programs available for their use and enjoyment.

Failing eyesight is a common symptom of aging. Many seniors, therefore, have difficulty reading the small print in the Edmonton Telephone Book even with prescription eyeglasses. The Committee suggests:

10e. That Edmonton Telephones print the government and other information sections in the Edmonton Telephone Book in large type.

Phase II Implementation

11. IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON ENSURE THAT ADEQUATE FACILITATIVE SERVICES (E.G., TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION) BE AVAILABLE FOR SENIOR CITIZENS.

Recommendations 1 through 10 have proposed many strategies to improve Edmonton's preventive services for older people. However, no matter how extensive the preventive service network becomes, it may be inaccessible for many seniors without adequate facilitative services (e.g., transportation). Two facilitative services for seniors are delivered by the Transportation Department. The first, the Seniors Transit Pass Program, provides free use of transit upon purchase of a special annual pass for people over 65 who use Edmonton Transit (and spouses, if a low income family). The second, the Disabled Adult Transportation System (D.A.T.S.), is available at a nominal fee for people who cannot travel on regular transit lines because of physical limitations.

While the Project Committee recognizes the value of these programs in enriching the lives of older people, both programs need review to ensure that they are adequately meeting the current needs of seniors. The Committee therefore agrees:

11a. That the seniors' bus pass program be reviewed (financial implications, impact upon seniors) with older people and reassessed to determine its current appropriateness and importance for seniors. *(Action - Transportation Department.)*

Phase I Implementation

The Committee notes that the City's Executive Committee has already directed the Transportation Department to review the fares of the Transit Pass Program and how best to meet the transit needs of older people, thereby implementing this strategy.

The Project Committee is aware of the service and financial limitations facing D.A.T.S. at this time. However, for many older people, D.A.T.S. is the only feasible means of transportation. Approximately 39% of individuals 65 years of age and over in Alberta have some physical limitation. More than two-thirds of these disabled seniors have problems related to mobility or body movement; 15%, to hearing; and 8%, to eyesight.[24] For older people who cannot use regular transit as a result of their disabilities, D.A.T.S. is an essential service. The Committee therefore urges:

11b. That, in the allocation of funds for the transportation of seniors, higher priority be given to D.A.T.S. *(Action - Transportation Department.)*

Phase I Implementation

and:

11c. That the City of Edmonton ensure a level of service appropriate for D.A.T.S. to continue to meet the special needs of disabled seniors, as well as other physically disabled persons. *(Action - Transportation Department.)*

Phase I Implementation

The Committee also suggests that the Transportation Department investigate alternative or supplementary modes of transportation, such as taxis, neighbourhood car pools, or other possible resources. In addition, in keeping with Strategy 1b the Transportation Department should review the feasibility of assisting community organizations to develop volunteer driver programs, especially for social outings.

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[24] 1986. Report of the Canadian Health and Disability Survey: 1983 - 1984. Statistics Canada and Department of the Secretary of State of Canada.

The Mirosh Report[25] recommends the expansion of community-based programs and services to enable older persons to remain in their own homes as an alternative to long term institutional care. These older people may have physical limitations and require D.A.T.S. to attend the programs and services designed to maintain them in the community. With D.A.T.S. currently operating at a maximum level, any increase in user numbers could cause delays and lack of service to current eligible clientele. The Committee therefore proposes:

11d. That community-based services offered as alternates to institutions (in auxiliary hospitals and nursing homes, and social day care) be strongly encouraged to budget appropriately for D.A.T.S. service. *(Action - Transportation Department.)*

Phase I Implementation

Some seniors have difficulty using regular transit services for physical reasons. New technology, however, is constantly being developed and may be applicable to alleviate such problems and to permit more universal access to all transit services. The Committee suggests:

11e. That the Transportation Department continue to investigate and implement appropriate new technologies as they relate to the transportation needs of seniors.

Phase II Implementation

Some seniors also have difficulty in crossing busy intersections because the walk signals are too short. While recognizing the necessity of standardizing signals for optimum traffic flow, the Committee proposes:

11f. That the Transportation Department explore means to provide a solution to the need for longer walk signals for seniors.

Phase II Implementation

Over the past several years, the concept of local measured telephone service has been discussed by City Administration and Council. "Local Measured Service"

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[25] Mirosh, Diane. 1988. New Vision for Long Term Care – Meeting the Need. The Committee on Long Term Care for Senior Citizens. Government of Alberta: Edmonton.

(LMS) would impose a surcharge for local telephone calls beyond a standard time or call allocation per month. Implementation of LMS would be a hardship for a great many seniors on fixed incomes who use their telephone as a primary contact for social relationships. In addition, LMS could cripple Telephone Reassurance Programs for isolated older people operated by Senior Centres and voluntary agencies. As a result, the Committee urges:

> **11g. That the City of Edmonton maintain the current unlimited use of local telephone service for all subscribers (and not implement "Local Measured Service").** *(Action - Edmonton Telephones.)*
>
> **Phase I Implementation**

12. IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON ELIMINATE UNIVERSAL SUBSIDIES FOR OLDER PEOPLE, WHEN THE SUBSIDY IS BASED SOLELY UPON AGE, IN FAVOUR OF ADEQUATE SUBSIDIES WHERE NEED HAS BEEN DEMONSTRATED.

From 1971 to 1985, the average income of Canada's senior population increased 4.5 times, in contrast to 3.3 times for the general population.[26] By 1985, the average income for an individual 65 years of age or older was $12,829. In addition, the Canada Pension Plan is now more universal, benefiting more seniors.

Fewer older people also fell below Statistics Canada's low income cut-off lines in 1985 than in 1971. However, while only 9% of older couples fell below this level, 47% of all single older persons were below the low-income line.

The Committee recognized that income levels have risen for many seniors who had the resources to invest wisely and/or had private pension plans. Some subsidy is still seen as necessary for the large number who have low income. In

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[26] "Pensions and Incomes of the Elderly in Canada, 1971-1985", The Daily, 7, Statistics Canada (August 9th, 1988).

addition, the Committee proposes:

> **12a. That the City of Edmonton adopt a common method of assessing need for seniors' eligibility for subsidies and discounts.** *(Action - Parks and Recreation, Social Services, Transportation Departments.)*
>
> **Phase II Implementation**

A single eligibility requirement for municipal subsidies and discounts would reduce applicant confusion when dealing with multiple guidelines for different services and help eliminate time-consuming paperwork.

13. IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON URGE THE PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS TO ALLOCATE A LARGER SHARE OF THEIR BUDGETS FOR COMMUNITY-BASED PREVENTIVE AND FACILITATIVE SERVICES.

As indicated in Section II, "The Framework", the Project Committee strongly believes that municipal emphasis on community-based preventive and facilitative services will enhance the quality of life and promote wellness within Edmonton's senior population. If older people can live healthier and more productive lives, fewer resources will be required for expensive care.

While the City can reallocate some of its budgetary dollars to transform the Committee's recommendations into policy and practice, additional resources are required to help achieve wellness for Edmonton's older people. Many Municipal Departments and Authorities would be able to provide more extensive and effective services and programs for seniors with increased funding from other levels of government. The Project Committee, however, stresses the following identified needs:

13a. **That the City of Edmonton urge the Provincial Government to provide increased provincial funding to expand preventive social services offered through the Family and Community Support Services Program.** *(Action - Social Services Department.)*

Phase I Implementation

As noted previously, the vast number of older people remain, and want to remain in their own homes, rather than enter institutions. Yet, the majority of Canada's health care dollars for seniors are spent to support institutional services. The Committee believes that seniors should reside in the community as long as possible and proposes:

13b. **That the City of Edmonton urge the Provincial Government to recognize the need for increased provincial funding to expand services, including support services, offered by the Edmonton Home Care Program.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health.)*

Phase I Implementation

Seniors' wellness programs which are community based, easily accessible, integrate the expertise and support of health and social agencies, provide services perceived by the older individual to be beneficial, and recognize senior adults as consumers in the planning and evaluation of services, provide a viable and positive alternative in the promotion and maintenance of health for seniors".[27] The Committee therefore suggests:

13c. **That the City of Edmonton stress to the Provincial Government the need for increased funding to support multi-disciplinary well-elderly clinics where health assessments, education, screening, and consultation can be offered to older individuals.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Social Services Department.)*

Phase I Implementation

Some seniors are more "vulnerable" to health problems (e.g., men over 80 years of age, females over 85 years of age, seniors living alone without social

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[27] Duggan Health Centre. (1988). Seniors Adult Wellness Program Proposal for Duggan Health Centre (Draft) 6. Edmonton Board of Health: Edmonton.

supports) than others. Without adequate and proactive surveillance, vulnerable seniors can be overlooked and only come to the health care system's attention when a crisis and often irrevocable situation occurs. The vulnerable elderly, many ineligible for Home Care, require regular health monitoring through outreach visits and health clinics where referrals, educational counselling, and development of support groups can be facilitated. The Committee proposes:

13d. **That the City of Edmonton urge the Provincial Government to provide increased funding to enable development and expansion of the outreach component provided by public health nurses and Senior Centres.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health.)*

Phase I Implementation

In addition, as outlined in Recommendation 11, additional monies are desperately required to help D.A.T.S. meet the needs of its clientele, including seniors. The Committee therefore suggests:

13e. **That the City of Edmonton continue to present strongly the need for additional funding for D.A.T.S. to the appropriate Provincial and Federal Departments.** *(Action - Transportation Department.)*

Phase I Implementation

and:

13f. **That the City of Edmonton negotiate with the Provincial Government a direct funding arrangement for D.A.T.S. to provide service for out-patient and community based geriatric programs offered at local facilities.** *(Action - Transportation Department.)*

Phase I Implementation

Proposed provincial policies with respect to emphasizing community-based services for seniors and de-emphasizing institutional care may, if implemented, have service and ultimately funding consequences for the Senior Citizens Lodge Program. The Project Committee wishes to ensure that the Provincial Government undertakes financial responsibility for increased program costs due to

Provincial policy changes and urges:

13g. That the Social Services Department, Greater Edmonton Foundation, and Edmonton Board of Health monitor the support requirements of Lodge residents and if requirements continue to increase, examine options for support provisions, including methods of obtaining increased funding from the Provincial Government as part of the community-based aspect of home care.

Phase I Implementation

14. IT IS THE RECOMMENDATION OF EDMONTON SENIORS 2000 COMMITTEE THAT THE CITY OF EDMONTON PERMIT MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTS TO INCLUDE IMPLEMENTATION OF APPROVED STRATEGIES AS IDENTIFIABLE ITEMS IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET PROCESS.

The Project Committee believes it is essential that assistance and consultation be available to help Departments and Authorities implement the recommendations and strategies contained in this report. Inclusion of identified seniors budget items in the annual budget process will enable Departments to identify means of implementing recommendations and strategies as well as defining future plans.

In addition, the Project Committee proposes:

14a. That the interdepartmental committee of Civic personnel aided by senior citizens, when appropriate, (Strategy 3a) be the mechanism for this assistance and consultation. *(Action - All Departments and Authorities.)*

Phase II Implementation

This will facilitate Departments to implement strategies and recommendations of this report by providing broader perspectives. This could be acted upon by the committee through specific requests of Departments and Authorities.

If progress towards implementation of recommendations and strategies proceeds, by 1994, the Committee will be able to determine the impact of the implemented recommendations and approved strategies for seniors services. The Committee will also be able to review demographic projections, consider any impingements from other levels of government and the non-governmental sector, and identify current trends in seniors services. Any overall adjustments to the City's approach toward seniors services can be recommended at that time. The Project Committee therefore urges:

14b. **That a major review of Municipal programs and services for seniors be scheduled by the City Manager for 1994.** *(Action - Social Services, Transportation, Telephones, Corporate Services, Parks and Recreation, Police Departments, Edmonton Board of Health, Edmonton Public Library, Greater Edmonton Foundation.)*

Phase III Implementation

Seniors organizations and agencies serving seniors should also be apprised of the City's intentions with regard to seniors planning. The Committee therefore believes:

14c. **That a conference/seminar/workshop be held with senior's organizations and agencies serving seniors to discuss the implications of the proposed recommendations and strategies within three months of approval of this report.** *(Action - Edmonton Board of Health, Edmonton Public Library, Social Services, Transportation, Parks and Recreation and Police Departments.)*

Phase I Implementation

V. CONCLUSIONS

The Project Committee's report contains fourteen fundamental recommendations with sixty-four strategies for implementation by City Departments and Authorities or by the Administration as a whole.

Edmonton City Council and the decision-making Boards of Authorities should adopt the recommendations within their jurisdiction prior to considering the more specific strategies. Recommendations provide the overall directions to achieve the goals of wellness, involvement, and full participation of seniors, while the strategies suggest more specific means of implementing the directions. Departments and Authorities will be required to determine within their particular context the most effective, appropriate, and efficient ways of implementing the recommendations through addressing the strategies.

The majority of strategies can be implemented by Departments and Authorities through redefining priorities and reallocating monies. However, new funding will be required for some of the proposed strategies if they are to be fully implemented. Departments and Authorities will have to identify the additional costs when feasibility studies are initiated (for some) or completed (for others).

The Project Committee's recommendations provide the City with a framework for services for older people to the year 2000. During the ensuing years, the City must monitor progress and incorporate responses to emerging needs of the seniors community into ongoing Municipal planning.

It is the firm belief of the Project Committee that implementation of the recommendations and strategies contained in this report will ultimately be less costly to ratepayers of the City of Edmonton and to other levels of Government than continuing to increase funding for existing services and programs proportionately to meet the projected growth in the seniors population. However, this does not in any way mean that there will not be increased costs to meet the

needs of the rapidly increasing population of older people. More importantly, by emphasizing preventive and facilitative services for older Edmontonians, these new approaches foster wellness, participation of seniors in the decisions which affect their lives, mutual aid and self-help, self-care, and community-based services. The Committee thus intends its findings to support older people in living longer, more productive and satisfying lives.

APPENDIX

EDMONTON SENIORS 2000: PROCESS

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The City of Edmonton has long been interested in the well-being of the City's older population. In 1975, the then Commissioner of Public Affairs requested the Parks and Recreation and Social Services Departments to outline services that should be provided for senior citizens in Edmonton for the next decade. Joined by a division of what is now the City's Transportation Department, and aided by a Technical Advisory Committee, these Departments prepared "A Plan for the Development of Services for Senior Citizens in Edmonton". The Plan presented priorities for services which should be developed by Municipal, Provincial, and Federal Government agencies and Departments, as well as by the voluntary sector. Council's decision to adopt the Plan in principle in 1978 concluded the process of that research/planning project.

A 1983 review of Plan recommendations, requested by the then Chief Commissioner, revealed that the vast majority of these had been implemented and in many instances, exceeded.

TEN YEAR REVIEW

In late 1986, the Social Services Department began the task of examining possibilities of a major update of the Plan or development of a new planning process which would result in recommending ways to meet the needs of Edmonton's older residents to the turn of the century. Economic conditions in Alberta at that time necessitated a narrowing of the scope of the project to those services provided or supported by the City of Edmonton.

In the spring of 1987, endorsement by civic Administration was secured for initiation of the process.

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

Upon obtaining permission to proceed with the project, City Departments and relevant municipal Authorities were surveyed to determine their interest and willingness to participate. The following agreed and assigned staff to serve on the Project: Social Services, Parks and Recreation, Transportation, Telephones (later withdrew), Police and Personnel Departments and Edmonton Public Library, Edmonton Ambulance Authority, and Edmonton Board of Health.

CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

Project initiators recognized that City of Edmonton staff working with older people in all relevant Departments and Authorities possessed a wealth of knowledge and expertise. However, plans developed without community input do not necessarily reflect the realities faced by citizens and may be oriented more towards maintaining existing systems and structures, than reflecting how individuals perceive and utilize the system.

A prime underlying assumption of the Project Committee was, therefore, that planning must occur with the knowledge, consent, and involvement of those who are affected by the planning. Implementing this philosophy required considerable effort and, indeed, a major time commitment.

PARTICIPATION

Departmental representatives nominated older and retired citizens with broad interest and knowledge of the needs of seniors to participate on the Project Committee. It was anticipated that these citizens would have expertise in a number of areas, represent the project to their age peers, and provide the Project Committee with perspectives of service users.

Catherine Berry, Stewart Bishop, Earle Hawkesworth, Myrtle Leadlay, and Keith Wass were initially approached and agreed to serve on the Committee. Myrtle

Leadlay left Edmonton for the winter and was replaced by Hazel Wilson; the temporary absence of Stewart Bishop introduced Jeff Allen (Executive Director, Strathcona Place Society) as a temporary replacement who became a full member of the Committee after Stewart Bishop's return.

The advisory role of citizens quickly evolved, and the equality of citizens and departmental representatives, was the result of this natural process. The Edmonton Seniors 2000 Project became a truly collaborative effort among citizens and planners, and reflected a mutual respect for skills, knowledge, and abilities of all participants.

INPUT

One of the problems faced by planners is the need for a clear understanding of the difficulties and problems faced by the population being planned for as well as for their strengths and abilities. Specific methods are required to elicit this critical information. To this end, considerable efforts were invested by the Project Committee in obtaining substantive input from seniors and our future senior population.

A citizen input plan was developed, discussed, and considered by the Committee and appropriate and feasible methods to implement the plan were determined. Articles were prepared for NEWS FOR SENIORS requesting input (this vehicle is estimated to reach 20,000 retired and semi-retired persons). A day-long workshop with guest speakers, plenary, and small group sessions was conducted with over 80 knowledgeable older persons. Round table discussions were held between the Project Committee and City supported agencies to elicit their knowledge of the needs of older people and trends and means for addressing need. An additional workshop was held for individuals representing ethno-cultural seniors groups to determine special needs of this segment of the older population. Letters requesting input, with basic questions for reaction, were sent to over 400 seniors organizations, agencies, service clubs, and individuals resulting in much to review and consider. All Committee members received copies of community input for consideration during the development of recommendations

and strategies for implementation by the City.

DATA

Each departmental representative provided information on services for older people provided and/or supported by the respective department.

MANDATE

Upon reviewing the roles of the three levels of government, the Committee felt that the City's mandate should be the provision of preventive/facilitative services for older people. A statement to this effect was circulated to Departments and Authorities and concurred in by Administration. Municipal Services were assessed as to their being preventive/facilitative in order to determine congruity between existing City services and the proposed role for the City.

REPORT

The recommendations and strategies ultimately contained in the Report were developed by Committee members and concurred in during a two day special meeting of the Committee.

The report was drafted and circulated to members for review and approval. The report was than forwarded to Departments and Authorities for review and reaction. Feedback was reviewed and incorporated into the document and the revised report, forwarded to the City Manager for his consideration.